

Transport Ministry may unwind AP restrictions to position Malaysia as transshipment hub

By Jerry Choong



Transport Minister Anthony Loke said his ministry will first analyse existing laws to simplify the process as an interim step. — Picture by Shafwan Zaidon

PUTRAJAYA, May 2 — The Transportation Ministry is looking to loosen restrictions on approved permits (APs) for the importation of some goods in an effort to turn Malaysia into a transshipment hub for the Asean region, said Anthony Loke.

He said his ministry will first analyse existing laws to simplify the process as an interim step.

“For example, the shipping containers for foreign-manufactured automobiles require an AP per container,” Loke said following the National Shipping and Port Council meeting.

He said that such vehicles are legally defined as imports even when they are not meant for the Malaysian market and were merely transiting in Malaysia.

“Because of this, exporters avoid us due to the effort needed to secure an AP. “Malaysia is already a hub, but by loosening the restrictions we will be able to boost interest in us as a transshipment choice even further,” Loke said.

He also said he has urged port operators to approach automobile manufacturers and encourage them to consider Malaysia for their transshipment purposes.

“I have already presented the matter to the Cabinet with all the relevant items for their consideration. In turn, I have been directed to call for a meeting with the relevant agencies to go over the items.

“It will involve not just the shipping industry and port operators, but also economic agencies as well,” Loke said.